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16 December 1965

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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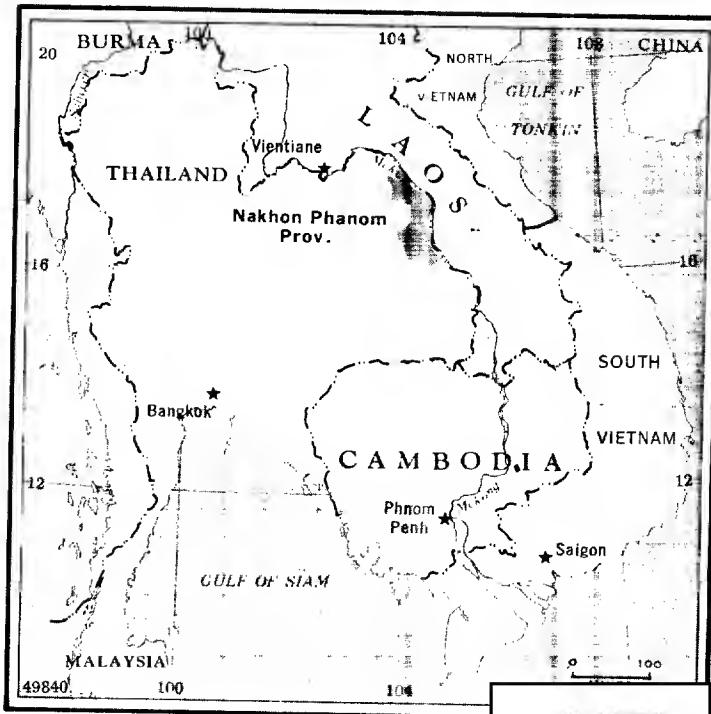
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THAILAND

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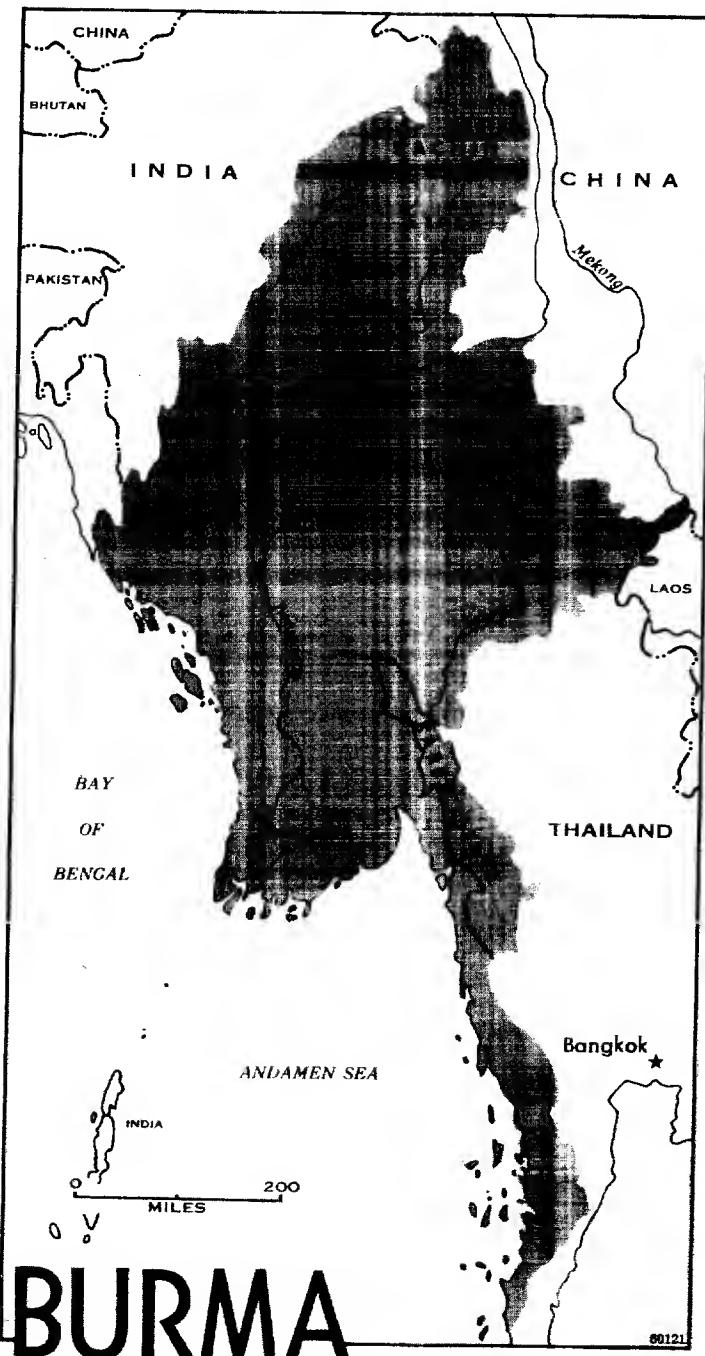
Thailand: Communist subversives in northeast Thailand may soon be getting outside support for increased activity.

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[redacted] There have been numerous unconfirmed reports of Lao and Vietnamese cadres crossing the Mekong clandestinely. [redacted]

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So far, Communist armed activity in the northeast has been confined to terrorist assassinations. The several skirmishes which have occurred in the northeast this year have resulted from government operations.



BURMA

Burma: [Recent major policy speeches by Ne Win have underscored Burma's generally downward spiral.]

[Ne Win admitted that the national economy "is in a terrific mess," but he did not propose any alternatives to his drive toward revolutionary socialism. Ne Win attributed the chaotic state of the economy to a lack of capable and honest civilian administrators and to the unwillingness and inability of army leaders to implement his policies. Ne Win apparently is convinced that many army leaders are dragging their heels because they do not genuinely accept his "Burmese way to socialism."]

[There is mounting evidence of friction between field commanders and members of Ne Win's ruling Revolutionary Council. The commanders resent being forced to assume responsibility for the implementation of policies drafted in Rangoon.]

[For the first time, Ne Win alluded publicly to dissension within Burma's single ruling party, although rumors of factionalism and growing political differences have been circulating for several months. He also revealed that insurgency is on the rise in the Delta, Kachin State, and Karen State, especially in the area east of the Salween River.]

[Ne Win's effective control of Burma is probably not in serious jeopardy at present. However, his regime might be toppled if he remains determined to force through his economic program, and if disaffection mounts among his field commanders whose support is essential to the government's existence.]

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West Germany: [Chancellor Erhard is still being pressed by some key advisers to obtain US support for an "integrated nuclear weapons system."]

[It is still unclear whether Erhard will take the initiative in presenting a concrete proposal to President Johnson. However, Kurt Birrenbach, an influential adviser on foreign policy, claims that widespread domestic support exists for a plan which would give Germany and Italy part ownership of a new weapons system built around UK and US Polaris submarines.]

[The force's governing body would be primarily concerned with strategy and crisis management but would deal also with foreign policy and arms control matters. Decisions would be made jointly. An American veto would be balanced by one for the European members acting as a unit, and provision would be made for the possibility of joint European ownership.]

[Birrenbach may have overestimated his support. Some Bonn leaders have expressed satisfaction with the possibilities being opened up by the special committee. Erhard himself is wary of putting too much stress on nuclear sharing, in the face of misgivings about West Germany's aspirations among many NATO members.]

[Birrenbach's plan would cause great difficulty for other NATO members. Functions of the new force would cut across those planned for NATO's special committee and the idea that the governing body would "coordinate foreign policy matters" would meet strong opposition.]

[According to Defense Secretary Healey, London still wants to try the special committee setup before going any further with nuclear force arrangements.]

NOTES

Lebanon-France: Lebanon has virtually concluded a deal with France to purchase six Mirage III jet fighters. Final details of the transaction, which involves an option to buy eight additional Mirages later, are still being worked out, but a French Foreign Ministry official has said the deal "can be considered closed." Lebanon has been anxious to purchase Western supersonic jet fighters in order to avoid accepting a United Arab Command offer of MIG-21s.. Beirut still must decide whether it should buy aircraft for a second squadron of fighters and whether to accept a US offer to sell Hawk antiaircraft missiles.

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